



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Martin Gross, Chair, Airport Advisory Committee
Matthew R. Walsh, Community Development Project Manager

DATE: May 8, 2006

SUBJECT: Airport Master Plan Update

Recommendations:

Accept the following report and adopt the Airport Master Plan Update.

Background:

In July 2004, the City engaged Hoyle Tanner Associates (HTA) of Manchester, New Hampshire to complete a comprehensive Airport Master Plan update and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The previous master plan was completed in 1996. The study was 97.5% funded by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and State of New Hampshire Division of Aeronautics. Per FAA recommendations, the City should complete an update to the master plan every 5 to 10 years.

The updated master plan contains 6 chapters and 11 appendices (A-K). Recommendations were developed through input from a Planning Advisory Committee, (PAC) which consisted of the City Airport Advisory Committee, airport users, representatives from Concord Aviation Services (City's fixed base operator and part time airport manager), City staff, as well as abutters. The PAC held 4 public forums through the master plan process, reviewing and commenting on all areas of the plan.

Discussion:

The purpose of the Airport Master Plan is to identify and inventory existing conditions, predict future aviation demands, and develop a plan to remedy existing deficiencies and anticipate future needs.

1. ***Summary of Current Conditions:*** Concord Municipal Airport is a general aviation airport, which was established in 1918. The airport contains approximately 614 acres and features two runways (Runway 17-35, 6,005' x 100', and Runway 12-30, 3,200' x 75').

A total of 92 aircraft (including military) are based at the airport. Of this total, 71% are small, private single engine aircraft. However, the facility does have some larger private aircraft, including larger corporate aircraft for local businesses (most notably Jefferson Pilot Financial).

The airport currently maintains a B-II designation, meaning that the largest aircraft that commonly uses the airport has an approach speed of 121 knots and a wingspan of 78 feet or less. Note, the airport can (and frequently does) handle larger craft – such as Boeing 727s on NASCAR race weekends. Approximately 57,000 operations (takeoffs or landings) occur at the airport each year.

2. ***Summary of Anticipated Future Growth:*** By the year 2023, it is anticipated the airport will host 137 aircraft (a 48% increase over 2006 levels). This is due to a variety of factors, including Manchester Airport's continued trend towards commercial, not general aviation, users and a lack of available space at other regional general aviation airports (such as Nashua Municipal Airport). Though small private planes will still dominate the facility, it is anticipated that the number of small corporate jets at the airport will increase due to decreasing costs of small jets and the increasing popularity of fractional ownership. Annual operations are expected to increase from 57,000 to 85,400 per year by 2023.
3. ***Overview of Key Recommendations:*** The Master Plan contains several recommendations as well as 44 major Capital Improvement Projects totaling more than \$31 million between 2006 and 2023. FAA and the State of New Hampshire would cover \$23,671,000 (or 72%) of this total. Though the plan includes numerous projects and recommendations, a quick summary of some of the major projects and recommendations is as follows:

- a) **Full-Time Airport Manager:** Currently, the City contracts with Concord Aviation Services to provide part-time management of certain aspects of the airport, as well as Fixed Base Operator services (sale of aviation fuels, car rental, leasing of City owned hangars and tie downs, etc.) All other management activities are shared between City Administration, General Services Department Public Properties Division, Community Development Department – Engineering, Business Development, and Planning Divisions. Full-time managers are currently used at several other comparable general aviation airports in New Hampshire, including Laconia, Nashua, and Lebanon.

Though the Master Plan recommends that the City hire a full time Airport Manager, the Airport Advisory Committee recommends that the City not undertake such action until a comprehensive management study of the airport is completed.

- b) **Acquisition of Abutting Private Property:** The plan recommends continued acquisition of fee title or easements on several properties surrounding the airport. Several abutting properties are within key runway obstacle free zones. Therefore, acquisition of these properties is in the City's interests as ownership would (1) remove some land use conflicts near the airport and (2) allow the City to remove potential safety hazards (such as tall trees).
 - c) **New Airport Terminal:** The plan recommends construction of a new 9,000 SF airport terminal. The current terminal was constructed in 1938 and expanded in 1961. This proposal was carried over from the 1996 plan, as the terminal has several code deficiencies (including Americans with Disabilities Act), is in poor condition, and does not present a proper image for the City during high profile events at the airport (such as Presidential Primaries and NASCAR races). Total project cost is estimated at \$2.6 million (design and construction). It is likely the FAA would not participate in funding a new terminal. Therefore the City would likely be responsible for all costs. City Administration continues to seek grant funds to assist with this project. Due to limited available land area and the need to expand ramps for aircraft, the Master Plan does not recommend inclusion of a new Heights fire station as part of a new terminal.
 - d) **Available "Developable Land":** Though the airport is 614 acres in size, less than 10 acres is available for development as all other portions of the airport have been reserved as conservation areas to help facilitate preservation and re-population of the Karner Blue Butterfly, a nationally endangered species. This is an important issue, as the amount of airport land reserved for conservation will impact the airport's ability to grow in the future. Therefore, the plan recommends that all land available for development be exclusively reserved for aviation related uses.
 - e) **Future Runway Expansion:** Lastly, the Master Plan recommends a 1,000-foot extension of Runway 17-35. This expansion will allow the airport to more easily accommodate roughly 80% of small jets in the aviation market place. This recommendation was included in the plan because the trend in aviation is towards fractional ownership and small jets, and growth of all aviation sectors at the airport over the next 20 years. This project is a long-term recommendation, likely beyond 2016, and has a cost of \$2.103 million in 2004 dollars.
4. ***Airport's Economic Impact:*** The master plan update includes an economic impact assessment of the airport. According to this study, the airport annually stimulates \$7.2 million in spending in the local and regional economy. The airport also directly creates 45 jobs in the local economy and contributes to the creation of nearly 1,670 jobs in the regional economy.